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THE SCENERY AND ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND
ILLUSTRATED,

BY BARTLETT AND WILLIS.

"Know thyself," was the wise advice of the ancient Greek philosopher; and it is certainly desirable that we should know ourselves, and take every pains in our power to acquire self-knowledge. But the task is by no means an easy one; and hence the poet Burns well exclaims,

"Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see ourself as others see us;
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
And foolish notion.
What airs in dress and gait wad lea' us,
And e'en devotion!"

Determined, however, as we for our own part always are, to acquire a knowledge of ourselves, we felt no small gratification at the opportunity which, we presumed, would be amply afforded us by the work of Messrs Bartlett and Willis, the first an English artist, and the second an American *litterateur*, who have left their homes, in a most commendable spirit of philanthropy, to depict our scenery and antiquities, and to tell us all that it behoves us to know about them and ourselves. We accordingly lost not a moment in possessing ourselves of the precious treasure that would, as we hoped, "the giftie gie us, to see ourself as others see us;" and verily we must acknowledge that our wonderment during its perusal has been excessive, and that it has convinced us that we never knew ourselves before, or ever saw any thing about us with proper eyes. Henceforward we shall be cautious how we trust to the evidence of our senses for any thing we may see, for it is pretty plain that hitherto they have been of no manner of use to us. They have deceived and bamboozled us our whole lives long; and from the present moment we will trust to none save those of Messrs Bartlett and Willis—at least we will never trust to our own.

The very vignette on the title-page gave us some startling notification of the fearful discovery that awaited us. We had flattered ourselves that we were quite familiar with all the remarkable features of Irish scenery, and should not fail at a glance to identify any delineation of them, inasmuch as there is not a river or lake in Ireland of any extent that we have not sailed on, not a mountain that we have not climbed, not a headland or island on our coast that we have not visited. But here was a subject of a striking and most remarkable character that appeared quite new to us, nor should we ever have been able to guess at it, if a friend to whom we applied for information had not assured us, to our utter astonishment, that he was informed it was nothing less than our old acquaintance the Giants' Causeway! The wonder at our blindness, however, in some degree diminished when we perceived—if we can guess at the only point from which such a view could be obtained—that the ingenious artist had represented the sun setting in the north; for as often as we had been at the Causeway, we never had the observation or good fortune to witness such a sight. We must confess, moreover, that our feelings of mortification at our ignorance were partly soothed, when we turned over to the next vignette, which we at once recognised by its bridge to have been intended for Poul-a-phuca, or, as Messrs Bartlett and Willis name it, more correctly we presume, Phoula Phuca! We cannot, however, state the impression left on our minds by each of the prints in succession; but we shall take a glance at two or three of them; and when we have pointed out the particulars that most confounded us in each, we can have little doubt that such of our readers as have never seen the places they are intended to represent, will concur in the conviction that has been forced upon us by our inspection of them.

The first of them that astounded us beyond measure was that called "Ancient Cross, Clonmacnoise." At this place we had erewhile spent some of our happiest hours, meditating among its tombs, and admiring alike its various ancient architectural remains, and the sublimely desolate but appropriate character of its natural scenery. So familiar had we grown with this most exciting scene, that we thought that we should have been able to identify every stone in it blindfold; but that was all a mistake: we had only a dim and erroneous vision of its features; we saw nothing accurately. For instance, the stone cross which forms the principal object in the foreground, and which gives name to this subject—this cross, which we had often drawn and measured,

and found to be just fifteen feet in height, as Harris the antiquary had supposed before us, here appears to be more than twenty feet! while the base of it, which to our eyes always presented the appearance of a surface covered with a sculptural design of a deer-hunt, by men, dogs, chariots, and horses, is here an unadorned blank! The small round tower in the middle ground, which, as we believed, stood on the very shore, nearly level with the Shannon, has in this view mounted up the side of the hill. But what struck us as furnishing the most remarkable proofs of our defect of vision is, that the doorway of the great round tower, called O'Rourke's Tower, which, according to our measurement, was five feet six inches in height, and placed at the distance of eight feet from the ground, is here represented as at least twenty feet from it; and the stone wall of the cemetery, which, as it seemed to our perception, ran nearly from the doorway of the tower to within a few yards of the cross, has no existence whatever in the print, its place being occupied by some huge Druidical monument which we never were able to see. The perspective in this view is also of a novel kind, and well worthy of the attention of the Irish artists, and all those in Ireland who may hitherto have supposed that they knew something of this science. They will see that the level lines, or courses, on circular buildings, instead of ascending to the horizontal line when below it, descend to some horizontal line of their own; and that in fact there is not one horizontal line only in the picture, but perhaps a dozen, which fully proves that our previous notions on this point were wholly erroneous.

But we must hurry on. What have we got next? "Clew Bay from West Port," or "Baie De Clew, vue de West Port." Well, we believe this is intended for the beautiful Bay of Westport, called Clew Bay; but, if so, what has become of the beautiful country of Murisk, renowned in Irish song, which used to be situated at the base of Croagh Phadruig, or Croagh Patric? And is this the noble Reek itself? Good heavens! but it must have suffered from some strange convulsion since we saw it; it has been actually torn into a perpendicular cliff from its very summit to its base. But what are we thinking of? It was, we suppose, always so; and our not having observed it, is only a proof that we were never able to look at it correctly—and we should know better in future.

One peep more, and we shall have done. What is this? Scene from Cloonacartin Hill, Connemara. Ay, that's a scene we have looked at for many an hour. That group of jagged and pointed mountains to the left is the glorious Twelve Pins of Binnabeola. We never indeed saw them grouped so closely together, or standing so upright; but no matter: the hurricane of last year perhaps has blown them together, and carried away their sloping bases. But what do we see in the middle ground? The two lakes of Derry Clare and Lough Ina joined in one; and the rapid and unnavigable river which united them, or which we thought we saw there—where is it? *Non est inventus*: alas! alas! it is not to be found. Most wonderful! Lough Ina, with its three little wooded islands, no longer exists as a separate lake. It has, however, now got ten islands instead of three; but, then, they are all bare—all, all!—and the ancient ones have lost their wood. In like manner the flat heathy grounds between the mountains and the lakes to the right, have wholly disappeared, and nothing but water is to be seen in their place.

But our limits will not permit us to notice any more of Mr Bartlett's innumerable discoveries, which are equally remarkable in all his other views; so, after making him our grateful bow, we turn to the labours of his coadjutor, the celebrated author of "Pencilings by the Way," &c., little doubting that by his lucubrations we shall be equally edified and astonished. Mr Willis does not attempt a description of the scenes depicted by his co-labourer—it would, perhaps, be a difficult task for him, as in the instance of the view from Cloonacartin Hill, which we have noticed. But instead thereof, he treats us to pencilings of his own of a very graphic character, and usually as little like nature, as we had supposed it in Ireland, as even the drawings of Mr Bartlett. The chief difference between them is, that while the sketches of the one are landscape, those of the other are generally in the figure line; and after the model of the Dutch masters, mostly consisting of hackney-car drivers, waiters, chamber-maids, and, what his principal forte lies in, beggars! In his sketches of the latter he beats Callot himself; they are evidently drawn for love of the thing. After witnessing "the

splendid failure at Eglintown Castle," Mr Willis embarks at Port-Patrick, and lands at Donaghadee. This he tells us he did in imitation of St Patrick, "who evidently," like Mr Willis, "knew enough of geography to decide which point of Scotland was nearest to the opposite shore." This was new to us; but it should be noted in chronicles. He then travels on an Irish car to Belfast, and, like more of our modern visitors who favour us with their lucubrations, gives us a sketch of the said car, horse, and its driver, which, of course, are all singular things in their way. The pencilling, however, is a pleasant one enough, as it shows us that the car-driver very soon smoked the character of the travellers he had to take care of, and quizzed accordingly in a very proper and creditable Irish style. After a dangerous journey Mr Willis arrives safely in Belfast, and proceeds to give us his sketch of its inhabitants in the following words:—

"It was market-day at Belfast, and the streets were thronged with the country people, the most inactive crowd of human beings, it struck me, that I had ever seen. The women were all crouching under their grey cloaks, or squatting upon the thills of the potato carts, or upon steps or curbstones; and the men were leaning where there was any thing to lean against, or dragging their feet heavily after them, in a listless lounge along the pavement. It was difficult to remember that this was the most energetic and mercurial population in the world; yet a second thought tells one that there is an analogy in this to the habits of the most powerful of the animal creation—the lion and the leopard, when not excited, taking their ease like the Irishman."

Men of Belfast, what think you of that? But hear him out—

"I had thought, among a people so imaginative as the Irish, to have seen some touch of fancy in dress, if ever so poor—a bit of ribbon on the women's caps, or a jaunty cock of the 'boy's' tile, or his jacket or coat worn shapely and with an air. But dirty cloaks, ribbonless caps, uncombed hair, and not even a little straw taken from the cart and put under them when they sat on the dirty side-walk, were universal symptoms that left no room for belief in the existence of any vanity whatsoever in the women; many of them of an age, too, when such fancies are supposed to be universal to the sex. The men could scarce be less ornamental in their exteriors; but the dirty sugar-loaf hat, with a shapeless rim, and a twine around it to hold a pipe; the coat thrown over the shoulders, with the sleeves hanging behind; the shoes mended by a wisp of straw stuffed into the holes, and their faces and bare breasts nearly as dirty as their feet, were alike the uniform of old and young. Still those who were not bargaining were laughing, and even in our flourishing canter through the market I had time to make up my mind, that if they had taken a farewell of vanity, they had not of fun."

Again we say, men of Belfast, what think you of that? Did you ever see yourselves in this manner? If so, we must say that it is more than we ever did, though we have spent many a gay week in your noble, thriving, and most industrious town. "Neither a bit of ribbon on the women's caps, nor a jaunty cock of the boy's tile;" no, "but the dirty sugar-loaf hat, with a shapeless rim, and a twine round it to hold a pipe; and the shoes mended by a wisp of straw stuffed into the holes," &c. This certainly flogs; and we must look more attentively to the Belfastians in future.

Mr Willis proceeds to the hotel called the Donegal Arms, which he allows is a handsome house, in a broad and handsome street; and then he adds, "But I could not help pointing out to my companion the line of soiled polish at the height of a man's shoulder on every wall and doorpost within sight, showing, with the plainness of a high-water mark, the average height as well as the prevailing habit of the people. We certainly have not yet found time to acquire that polish in America [most civilized people!]; and if we must wait till the working classes find time to lean, it will be a century or two at least before we can show as polished an hotel as the Donegal Arms at Belfast, or (at that particular line above the side walk) as polished a city altogether." Such is Mr Willis's description of the Gresham's Hotel of Belfast, a house which we had foolishly thought was remarkable for its cleanliness, order, and good accommodation. Of course he got a miserable dinner of "unornamented chops and potatoes," after which he proceeded to visit the lions of Belfast. But we cannot follow him in all his wanderings, though he tells us many things that are not a little amusing, as, for instance, that the houses have a noseless and flattened aspect; that he saw Du-

bue's pictures of Adam and Eve, and sagaciously remarks how curious it is to observe how particularly clean they are (that is, Adam and Eve) before they sinned, and how very dingy after—being dirtied by their fall; and, what was very agreeable to him, the exhibitor of the pictures actually called him by name, having remembered seeing the great penciller in America! After having read the advertisements stuck on every wall, of "vessels bound to New York," and having "done that end of the town," he returned towards the inn. He then sallied out again to do the other end, and tells us with great satisfaction of a successful petty larceny of a very sentimental kind which he achieved in the Botanical Gardens—namely, plucking a *heart's-case*, as an expressive remembrance of his visit—"in spite of a cautionary placard, and the keeper standing under the porch and looking on." After this feat he returned to the inn, and very wisely went to bed. "A barefooted damsel, with very pink heels"—recollect, reader, that this was in the Donegal Arms—"was

My grim chamberlain,

Who lighted me to bed;

and in some fear of oversleeping the hour for the coach in the morning, I reiterated, and 'sealed with a silver token,' my request to be waked at six. Fortunately for a person who possesses Sancho's 'alacrity at sleep,' the noise of a coach rattling over the pavement woke me just in time to save my coffee and my place. I returned to my chamber the moment before mounting the coach for something I had forgotten, and as the clock was striking eight, the faithful damsel knocked at my door and informed me that it was *past six*."

Mr Willis is a fortunate traveller. Often as we have stopped at the Donegal Arms, we never had the good fortune to see the pink heels or bare legs of a chambermaid; and the moral economy of the house must be greatly changed also, when they allow the gentlemen to be called by the said bare-legged damsels; a duty which, in our visits at it and all other respectable hotels, always devolved on that useful personage called Boots. We do not think, however, that this change of the system—leaving the calling of the gentlemen to the chambermaids—would work well, except in the case of American travellers. Still, however, as he says, he was in time, and started off—no longer in St Patrick's track, but on King William's route to the battle of the Boyne—and arrives in Drogheda to dinner. He tells us that the country is very bare of wood, and then proceeds in the following words to describe the habitations.

"But what shall I say of the *human habitations* in this (so called) most thriving and best-conditioned quarter of Ireland? If I had not seen every second face at a hovel-door with a smile on it, and heard laughing and begging in the same breath everywhere, I should think here were human beings abandoned by their Maker. Many of the dwellings I saw upon the roadside looked to me like the abodes of extinguished hope—forgotten instincts—grovelling, despairing, nay, almost idiotic wretchedness. I did not know there were such sights in the world. I did not know that men and women, upright, and made in God's image, could live in styes, like swine, with swine—sitting, lying down, cooking and eating in such filth as all brute animals, save the one 'unclean,' revolt from and avoid. The extraordinary part of it, too, is, that it seems almost altogether the result of choice. I scarce saw one hovel, the mud-floor of which was not excavated several inches below the ground-level without; and as there is no sill, or raised threshold, there is no bar, I will not say to the water, but to the liquid filth that oozes to its lower reservoir within. A few miles from Drogheda, I pointed out to my companions a woman sitting in a hovel at work, with the muddy water up to her ankles, and an enormous hog scratching himself against her knee. These disgusting animals were everywhere walking in and out of the hovels at pleasure, jostling aside the half-naked children, or wallowing in the wash, outside or in—the best-conditioned and most privileged inmates, indeed, of every habitation. All this, of course, is matter of choice, and so is the offal-heap, situated, in almost every instance, directly before the door, and draining its putrid mass into the hollow, under the peasant's table. Yet mirth *does* live in these places—people *do* smile on you from these squalid abodes of wretchedness—the rose of health *does* show itself upon the cheeks of children, whose cradle is a dung-heap, and whose play-fellows are hogs! And of the beings who live thus, courage, wit, and quenchless love of liberty, are the undenied and universal characteristics. Truly, that mysterious law of nature by which corruption paints the rose and feeds the fragrant cup of the daisy, is not without its similitude! Who shall say what is

clean, when the back of the most loathsome of reptiles turns out, on examination, more beautiful than the butterfly? Who shall say what extremes may not meet, when, amid the filth of an Irish hovel, spring, like flowers, out of ordure, the graces of a prince in his palace?"

All this, the reader will remark, was seen from the top of a stage-coach on a drenching wet day! What wonderful powers of observation he must have! The penciller next treats us to a song, descriptive of an Irish cabin, which he tells us was sung for him by one of the most beautiful women he saw in Ireland. His memorable arrival in Drogheda is thus described:—

"As we drove into Drogheda, we entered a crowd, which I can only describe as suggesting the idea of a miraculous advent of rags. It was market-day, and the streets were so thronged that you could scarce see the pavement, except under the feet of the horses; and the public square was a sea of tatters. Here and all over Ireland I could but wonder where and how these rent and frittered habiliments had gone through the preparatory stages of wear and tear. There were no degrees—nothing above rags to be seen in coat or petticoat, waistcoat or breeches, cloak or shirt. Even the hats and shoes were in rags; not a whole covering, even of the coarsest material, was to be detected on a thousand backs about us: nothing shabby, nothing threadbare, nothing mended, except here and there a hole in a beggar's coat, stuffed with straw. Who can give me the genealogy of Irish rags? Who took the gloss from these coats, once broadcloth? who wore them? who tore them? who sold them to the Jews? (for, by the way, Irish rags are fine rags, seldom frieze or fustian). How came the tatters of the entire world, in short, assembled in Ireland? for if, as it would seem, they have all descended from the backs of gentlemen, the entire world must contribute to maintain the supply."

Readers, such of you as have been in Drogheda, did you ever see any thing like this? People of Drogheda, do you recognise yourselves in this picture here drawn of you? We are sure you cannot. But he is not done with you yet. He had been rather unlucky in the pursuit of his favourite subjects for study in Belfast—namely, the beggars; but this disappointment was atoned for in Drogheda. He describes them thus:—

"I had been rather surprised at the scarcity of beggars in Belfast, but the beggary of Drogheda fully came up to the travellers' descriptions. They were of every possible variety. At the first turn the coach made in the town, we were very near running over a blind man, who knelt in the liquid mud of the gutter (the calves of his legs quite covered by the pool, and only his heels appearing above), and held up in his hands the naked and footless stumps of a boy's legs. The child sat in a wooden box, with his back against the man's breast, and ate away very unconcernedly at a loaf of bread, while the blind exhibitor turned his face up to the sky, and, waving the stumps slightly from side to side, kept up a vociferation for charity that was heard above all the turmoil of the market place. When we stopped to change horses, the entire population, as deep as they could stand, at least with any chance of being heard, held out their hands, and in every conceivable tone and mode of arresting the attention, implored charity. The sight was awful: old age in shapes so hideous, I should think the most horrible nightmare never had conceived. The rain poured down upon their tangled and uncovered heads, seaming, with its cleansing torrents, faces so hollow, so degraded in expression, and, withal, so clotted with filth and neglect, that they seemed like features of which the very owners had long lost, not only care, but consciousness and remembrance; as if, in the horrors of want and idiocy, they had anticipated the corrupting apathy of the grave, and abandoned every thing except the hunger which gnawed them into memory of existence. The feeble blows and palsied fighting of these hag-like spectres for the pence thrown to them from the coach, and the howling, harsh, and unnatural voices in which they imprecated curses on each other in the fury of the struggle, have left a remembrance in my mind, which deepens immeasurably my fancied *nadir* of human abandonment and degradation. God's image so blasted, so defiled, so sunk below the beasts that perish, I would not have believed was to be found in the same world with hope."

But we, and our readers too, have probably had enough of Mr Willis's "Pencillings by the Way" in Ireland—pencillings which would seem to have been sketched with a material to which he is apparently very partial, namely, dirt. And now,

in return for the favour which this gentleman and his coadjutor have conferred upon us, by their exertions to enable us to improve our acquaintance with ourselves, we shall communicate our own opinion of them, and hope they will be equally benefited by the knowledge. We think, then, that they are a pair of gentlemen who must have a wonderfully good opinion of themselves, and that not altogether without reason, inasmuch as they possess in common one quality, which shall be nameless, but in which not even we, natives of the Emerald Isle as we are, can pretend to compete with them. We do not think that there are any two Irishmen living, who would travel into a foreign country to represent its scenery like the one, or sketch the manners and characteristics of its inhabitants like the other, and expect that they should be rewarded by the purchase of their works by that people or in that country. Mr Bartlett is but an indifferent artist, unacquainted even with some of the rudiments of his art, who has acquired the trade-knack of making pretty pictures by imitating the works of others, and by a total disregard of the real features of the scenes which he undertakes to depict. Mr Willis is a more accomplished sketcher in his line; and his delineations might be of value, if his conceited ambition to produce effect did not continually mar whatever intrinsic worth they might otherwise possess; but as it is, he is little better than a pert and flippant caricaturist. Neither one nor the other of these gentlemen, in short, would seem qualified for the task which they have so daringly undertaken; and we think it would have been well, if, before they resolved upon going through with it, they had been mindful of the Eastern proverb, "A lie, though it promise good, will do thee harm, and truth will do thee good at the last." Applying this to ourselves as critics, we feel in conclusion bound to acknowledge that the prints in this work, considered as engravings, are deserving of the highest praise.

George Petrie.
X. Y.

SUNRISE.

The night is past,
And the mists are fast
Receding before the morning blast;
But still the light
Of the Moon is bright,
As reluctant she yields to the Sun his right;
And the morning star
Appears, afar,
To announce the approach of Aurora's car.

The silver sea
Yet seems to be
As calm as the rest of infancy;
And the mountain steep
Is still in the deep
Profound repose of a giant's sleep;
And the gurgling rill,
That is never still,
Seems to double its noise to arouse the hill.

The Moon in the west
Now sinks to rest,
And the night-bird withdraws to its ivied nest
In yon antique tower,
Which shows how the power
And pride of man pass away in an hour:
And the carol—hark!
Of the early lark,
Proclaims the Sun to the dell still dark.

A yellow ray,
As if from the spray
Of the ocean, springs with the stars to play;
But they shrink away,
As afraid to stay,
And leave the rude beam to disport as it may;
And, one by one,
They all have gone,
And the sky is bright where they lately shone.

The surges roar
On the sounding shore,
As if to awaken the mountain hoar;
But the morning light
Has just touched the height
Of his topmost crag, and awaked his sight,